

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending in the present application.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hori (USP 5,847,726) in view of Mizutani (USP 6,078,400). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner has made the following allegations in the Office Action:

- a. an ink-jet printer (*printer 101, fig. 6*) is provided with storage means (*RAM 124 for storing various numerical values, fig. 6, col. 6, lines 5-25 and col. 9, lines 1-10*) which updates and stores the completion time of the last printing operation (*last/receding printing operation timing, col. 4, lines 12-18 and col. 9, lines 1-10*) (see page 2 of the Office Action); and
- b. Hori teaches a printer (printer 1 & 101, fig. 3 & 6 respectively) having plurality of storage areas (refs. 12 & 24, fig. 3 & 6 respectively) for storing various time data (e.g. time elapsing period, preceding printing timing, predetermined period, timing of last purging or flushing operation, col. 2, lines 65-67 and col. 3, lines 21-55) (see page 5).

Hori states, in col. 6, lines 15-25, that “The first period memory area 24B is adapted for storing a first period which is a running or elapsing period starting from the electrical power supply timing to the ink jet printer or from operation finish timing of the nozzle recovery mechanism 40 and ending at the present time. The second period memory area 24C is adapted for storing a second period which is a running or elapsing period starting from the preceding printing operation timing and ending at the present printing operation timing” (*emphasis added*).

In view of the foregoing statements, Hori stores information directed to a length of time (i.e., period of time) and does not store “a completion time instant of a last printing operation”

(i.e., the time at the moment when the last printing operation was conducted), as recited in claim 1.

Further, Hori states, in col. 9, lines 3-12, that “The first time instant memory area 124B is provided by NVRAM and is adapted to store therein the preceding or latest purging or flushing timing. The second time instant memory area 124C is adapted to store the present time instant (second time) sent from the clock 35 of the host computer 1” (*emphasis added*).

Hori, however, does not store “stores a completion time instant of a last printing operation conducted based on a print request and print data issued by a host machine” (i.e., a normal printing operation rather than purging or flushing operation), as recited in claim 1.

Hori also states, in col. 4, lines 12-18, that “Even if the main power supply means of the ink jet printer is frequently rendered ON and OFF, elapsing period starting from the completion timing of the preceding printing operation to the present time is computed by using the clock connected to the uninterruptible power supply.”

However, in Hori, the completion timing of the preceding printing operation is stored in the host computer and not in the ink-jet printer (see col. 6, lines 60-64) as required in claim 1.

Hori further states, in col. 2, lines 65-67, that “The first storage means is adapted for receiving and storing a time data from the clock means of the host computer. The second storage means is adapted for storing a predetermined period” (*emphasis added*).

Hori, however, does not disclose or suggest that the ink-jet printer “stores a completion time instant of a last printing operation conducted based on a print request and print data issued by a host machine,” as recited in claim 1.

Moreover, Hori states, in col. 3, lines 21-55, that the ink-jet printer has “means for storing the first period, means for storing a predetermined period” (lines 22-23), and “means for storing a completion timing of the latest purging or flushing operation by the nozzle recovery mechanism, means for receiving and storing a present time instant as a second time instant from the clock means, means for storing a predetermined period” (lines 40-45).

Hori, however, merely stores a completion timing of the latest purging or flushing operation and does not store “stores a completion time instant of a last printing operation conducted based on a print request and print data issued by a host machine,” as recited in claim 1.

The Examiner also states, in page 5 of the Office Action that:

The examiner relied upon fig. 7 to show how an elapse time is being calculated based upon last purging or flushing operation. Simply, an elapsed period/time is calculated based upon current time and last/receding printer operation (e.g. printing, flushing, purging).

Applicants respectfully submit, however, that claim 1 claims a “last printing operation” and not a “last/receding printer operation,” which, according to the Examiner, includes a printing operation. However, as stated in the foregoing, although the printer of Hori may disclose storing a first period which is a running or elapsing period starting from the electrical power supply timing to the ink jet printer or from operation finish timing of the nozzle recovery mechanism 40 and ending at the present time, storing a second period which is a running or elapsing period starting from the preceding printing operation timing and ending at the present printing operation timing, it does not store “a completion time instant of a last printing operation. operation

conducted based on a print request and print data issued by a host machine,” as recited in claim 1.

The Mizutani reference merely shows an ink-jet printer 3 shared by multiple apparatuses 1-2, as shown in Fig. 1.

In view of this, Applicants respectfully submit that even assuming that Hori and Mizutani can be combined, which Applicants do not admit, Hori in view of Mizutani fails to disclose or suggest “an ink-jet printer provided with storage means which updates and stores a completion time instant of a last printing operation conducted based on a print request and print data issued by a host machine,” as recited in claim 1.

Claims 2-18, variously dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Conclusion

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of the pending claims in the present application are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to enter this Reply After Final in that it raises no new issues. Alternatively, the Examiner is respectfully requested to enter this Reply After Final in that it places the application in better form for Appeal.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi (#40,417) at the

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telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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